

County Emergency Management Federal Funds Impact

House Interim Committee on Emergency Management and Veterans

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AOC ASSOCIATION OF
OREGON COUNTIES

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County Role in Emergency Management

Statutory

ORS 401.305(2) – Counties “shall” have an emergency management agency, cities and tribes “may”.

Practice

36 Counties – roughly half conduct emergency management as a county department, half through the Sheriff’s Office.

Counties operate as the “on the ground” function for emergency management, but rely upon OEM and Federal funds for many items

Federal Funding

- Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)- 50/50 match – *NOFO issued, pending court case*
 - State of Illinois v. Federal Emergency Management Agency (1:25-cv-00206)
- State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP)- Allocation/competitive
- Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) – Portland Metro area only
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)- 25% cost-share
- Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) - *Eliminated*
- Other Federal- CWDG, Title 3, etc.



Local Emergency Management Issues

Funding

- 3-legged stool – County General Funds, OEM programs (SPIRE bonding, training, ECC, etc.), and Federal grants
- Take away a leg of the stool and the system becomes unstable
- EMPG has historically funded 50% of the salary of the emergency manager salary in most counties.
- 24 of 36 counties have a 1- or 2-person emergency management division
- Federal funds are vital for emergency management day to day, not just in disaster response

FEMA Changes

- FEMA winding down some support tools
- Federal Incident Management Teams are decreasing in number
- Major disaster declarations capped at 75% Federal cost share, not a 75% floor - *proposed*
- Quadrupling the loss threshold to qualify for a major disaster declaration - *proposed*



Local Emergency Management Issues

Regional Differences

- Rural / Frontier vs Medium size vs Urban

Resource Demands and Fiscal Constraints

- County EMs having increased demands, duties, responsibilities
- OEM primarily federal funds
- Uncertainty of federal funding impacts planning – salary, equipment, training / exercises
- At risk: Alert and warning, public information, response coordination, risk assessments, evacuation coordination, recovery, etc.
- Direction towards local self-sufficiency, city and county budgets are facing deficits, limited options for revenue enhancements, especially for rural / frontier communities due to population size



What are Counties doing in response?

Innovation

Counties are creating their own type 3 Incident Management Team via OSSA, to allow for mutual aid response to smaller disasters

Planning

AOC, OSSA, and OEMA are currently working on a broader ‘future of county emergency management’ discussion with a goal to bring a modernization bill to the Legislature for 2027.

AOC and OEMA conferences this year both hosting panels on local EM challenges and opportunities



Opportunities for Action

No Cost

ORS 401 Modernization – update to reflect current requirements for effective Emergency Management Programs and Emergency Managers, allow for broader collaboration between counties and regions

Low Cost

OEM General Fund appropriation to create reimbursable fund for counties to access for training and mutual aid deployments to fund lodging and per diem (\$60-75k for a biennium)

High Cost

Backfill Federal grants that are cancelled, or are unavailable due to Federal Terms and Conditions

Future Growth

Legislative appropriations to the Oregon Disaster Response Fund (ORS 401.534) to prepare for disasters where Federal funding is not forthcoming or at lower rates than previously expected

Ongoing and stable state General Fund support for Emergency Management Programs



QUESTIONS?



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